

Application No. 10/620,961

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 4 is canceled, claims 1-3 and 5-10 are amended, and new claims 11-16 are added.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 3 has been amended to clarify that the layer of silver or tin is the metal layer recited in claim 1.

Claims 1 and 4-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watts in U.S. Patent No. 2,410,321 in view of Hamilton et al. in U.S. Patent No. 4,315,175. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Watts in view of Hamilton et al. and Applicants' admitted prior art. Claim 4 has been canceled.

Amended claim 1 of the application claims a method for improving an electric link between a contact and a cable. Refer, for example, to the contact 1 and cable 9 shown in FIGS. 1-4. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to claim a method for improving an electric link between a contact and a cable, the method comprising the step of pressing an intermediate conductive metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall with a pressing means, the pressing means comprising a die and a punch, the die being placed around outer surface of the wall and the punch adapted to drive the metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall, wherein the strands cooperate electrically with the metal layer upon insertion of the cable into the cavity.

The cited references neither teach nor suggest the method of amended claim 1. Further, there is no suggestion, either implicitly or explicitly, to combine the cited references as suggested in the rejection. As the Examiner points out, Watts does not disclose pressing a layer of metal into the contact, but rather discloses pressing a layer of insulation inserted between a

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ferrule and a metal sleeve. Watts therefore teaches away from the present invention and should not be combined with Hamilton or any other reference in reference to the present invention.

Even if the Watts and Hamilton were to be combined in the manner suggested by the Examiner, the cited references do not meet the claims. Watts discloses a layer of insulation 13a "whereby the outer sleeve 15, although of conducting material, actually is not in conducting relation to the circuit." (Col. 3, Lines 69-71) The method of making this connection as depicted in Figure 4 of Watts and disclosed further at Col. 4, Lines 4-14 makes clear that Watts is directed toward pressing insulating material into the disclosed electrical connector. Watts therefore does not teach or suggest the method of amended claim 1, which includes the step of pressing an intermediate conductive metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall with a pressing means, the pressing means comprising a die and a punch, the die being placed around outer surface of the wall and the punch adapted to drive the metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall.

Hamilton discloses a multi-strand aluminum conductor and a single aluminum conductor disposed in a ferrule that is compressed to at least partially eliminate voids between the strands. (See e.g. Col. 9, Line 66 to Col. 10, Line 18). Hamilton does not disclose pressing an intermediate conductive metal layer into a cavity of a contact using pressing means.

Therefore, the cited references do not teach or suggest the step of: pressing an intermediate conductive metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall with a pressing means, the pressing means comprising a die and a punch, the die being placed around outer surface of the wall and the punch adapted to drive the metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall, wherein the strands cooperate electrically with the metal layer upon insertion of the cable into the cavity, as recited in amended claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore allowable. Claims 2-9 depend from claim 1 and are also allowable at least for the reasons set forth above.

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Claim 10 has been amended to claim a connector assembly comprising a contact and a cable, the contact comprising a wall defining a cavity, the wall having an inner and an outer surface and the cable comprising a plurality of strands, the strands of the cable inserted into the cavity of the contact, an intermediate conductive metal layer having been previously pressed against the inner surface of the wall of the cavity with a pressing means, wherein the pressing means comprise a die and a punch, the die being placed around the outer surface of the wall and the punch adapted to drive the metal layer into the cavity and against the inner surface of the wall and wherein the strands of the cable cooperate electrically with the metal layer. For at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1, claim 10 is allowable. New claims 11-16 depend from claim 10 and are also therefore allowable at least for these reasons.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



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